



## STATE OF WASHINGTON

### COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS

Minutes  
Burien Public Meeting  
Highline Performing Arts Center  
July 12, 2003

#### **Roll Call**

Commissioners present: Mario Reyes, Becky Diaz, Edward Davila, Diana Avalos, Gabriel Banfi, Homero Tamez, Gabriel Portugal, and Yvonne Lopez-Morton  
Commissioners absent: Alice Castilleja-Lara and Leo Gaeta

Staff present: Antonio Ginatta and Vita Echeverria

Meeting started at 9:15 a.m.

Commissioner Davila thanked the community for attending.

Burien Mayor Woo thanked the Commission for being in Burien. He spoke in Spanish about his personal experiences as an immigrant. He began by saying that when he first came to this country it was difficult because he had to learn a different language. He mentioned that after 11 years his mom still doesn't know how to speak English. He also said that he knows how difficult the transition is for the children in immigrant families.

Deputy Mayor Rose Clark asked the community for help in making Burien a wonderful place for families to live.

Commissioner Avalos made a motion to approve the Wenatchee meeting minutes.  
Commissioner Diaz seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

#### **Executive Director's Comments:**

Director Ginatta spoke about the loss of Deputy Saul Gallegos from Chelan. Commissioner Reyes said a few words about him as well. The Commission observed a moment of silence in memory of the Deputy.

#### **Commissioner Comments**

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Commissioner Banfi thanked the community of Burien for being supportive of the Commission.

Commissioner Davila extended his gratitude to the community for providing help with the planning efforts of the Commission meeting.

Commissioner Reyes announced that this would be the last meeting that he would be attending and that he would be missing everyone with whom he has worked on the Commission.

Commissioner Diaz also announced that this would be her last meeting and that she felt that the current group of people who are on the Commission are the best people she has ever had the opportunity to work with. She's sad to leave but knows that the Commission is working hard on some issues.

Commissioner Avalos mentioned that she was now the new Chair of the Education Committee of the Commission.

Commissioner Lopez-Morton thanked Edward for setting up a wonderful meeting.

Commissioner Portugal introduced himself as a new commissioner from the Pasco area.

Commissioner Homero also introduced himself as a new commissioner from the Pasco area.

Certificates of appreciation were given to Carolina Lucero and Ninfa Gutierrez of SeaMar. The awards were followed by a  
With a special musical dedication performed by guitarist Juan Carlos.

CHA gave a certificate of appreciation to Ricardo Sanchez of the Latino/a Educational Achievement Project. Mr. Sanchez recognized the work of Representative Kenney, Mexican Consul Jorge Madrazo, and Antonio Ginatta in pushing for the passage of HB 1079.

The Commission then recognized Vicky Fisher, Principal of Seahurst Elementary, Roxanne Hood of New Futures, and Dave Cotlove of Highline for their work in promoting educational opportunities for Latino students.

### **Public Comments**

Paulina Lopez, Red Cross: Spoke about her agency and distributed an informational packet.

Dean Parkins, City Council candidate: Was a past chairman of an economic development committee in Burien. He expressed an interest in learning about the issues of the Latino community. He once traveled to a Latin American country and to this day he says that when he closes his eyes he can still remember the music, warmth and calmness of the people.

Jean Carpenter, WA State PTA: Spoke about creating and expanding initiatives for creating parent institutions in 10 locations. She would like to get help from the Commission with this initiative

Joseph Garcia: Spoke about diabetes prevention and the Hispanic community.

Lourdes Sampera, President, Washington State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Announced that she would like to work with the community and make partnerships with Hispanic businesses in the area. . Her main focus would be to improve Hispanic business's access to local resources..

Dave Cotlove: Introduced two teachers from Durango, Mexico that are working with the Highline School District to teach students about Mexican culture.

### **Presentation**

Alberto Diaz, Executive Director of La Liga Hispana de Fútbol: Thanked the Commission for being in Burien and then spoke about his trip to Mexico as a representative of Mexicans living abroad, where he had an opportunity to meet with Presidente Fox.

Special entertainment by Sonido Sin Fronteras

### **Student Panel:**

Commissioner Avalos facilitated a group discussion that included Representative Dave Upthegrove and a panel of parents and students from Highline School District. The immigrant families of Burien had an opportunity to share their concerns with Representative Upthegrove and the community. The concerns included the educational stagnation faced by Latino immigrant children who are placed in full-day ESL (English as a Second Language) classes without building upon subject matter already learned by the students, such as mathematics. The parents stated that as the students focus on English-language skills, they invariably begin to lose ground in skills already learned in Latin American schools. The parents also expressed concern about the initial assessment of ESL students and questioned the validity of the assessment exams used to assign grade levels to such students. According to the parents, schools that place students below their appropriate grade level create sources of frustration and increase the likelihood of those students dropping out. The parents also expressed a significant desire to be involved in assisting in their children's education, but

were unaware of the resources available to them. In conclusion to the discussion, the parents agreed to continue meeting on a regular basis.

**Public Comments continued:**

Laura Escude: Spoke about the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and also about the “No Child Left Behind” Act. She has been concerned about the parents who don’t know what their rights are for their disabled children in school. She wants to see CHA be more proactive on this issue.

Flor Alarcon: Thanked the parents and students on the panel that spoke. She believes that they are working towards a wonderful future. She hopes that they will continue build partnerships with state representatives and the Commission.

Meeting Adjourned  
1:00 p.m.